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A.—(*a*) The Government have been advised to this effect by their legal advisers.

(*b*) Legal opinion has not been given on this specific point.

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" May I know what authority has been quoted by the legal adviser for this opinion ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I do not know what authority has been cited ; but I think they gave it on the basis of their knowledge and qualifications as lawyers."

Court of Wards

Management of the Sivaganga Zamindari.

* 1558 *Q.*—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Zamindar of Sivaganga attained his majority some years ago and, if so, when ;

(*b*) whether the zamindar has expressed a desire to take charge of the zamindari and, if so, when ;

(*c*) whether the Court of Wards is managing the zamindari in spite of objections from the zamindar and others and, if so, why ; and

(*d*) whether there is any proposal before the Government regarding the management of the zamindari and, if so, to what effect ?

A.—(*a*) The zamindar attained his majority in 1909.

(*b*) Yes. In October 1928.

(*c*) The estate is under the management of the Court of Wards not because of the minority of the proprietor but because of his infirmity. The Government are disposed to think that the proprietor may now be placed in charge of the estate ; but, under the provisions of section 57 of the Court of Wards Act, it is not admissible for the Court of Wards to release the estate until certain debts due by the estate have been repaid. Orders have been issued that these debts should be repaid at the earliest practicable date.

(*d*) No.

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" With regard to clause (*c*), may I know what this gentleman's infirmity is ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I do not catch the point."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" With regard to clause (*c*), may I know what this gentleman's infirmity is ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I am sorry the hon. Member should ask this question. It is not a pleasant thing to mention the infirmities of a person . . ."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" I am sorry this question is considered improper. It is based upon knowledge and information ; and the very fact that Government have resolved to release the estate after certain debts due by the estate had been repaid shows that all the story about the so-called infirmities is fiction and a myth. May I know what is the amount of the debt that remains to be discharged ? "

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The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Notice, Sir ; I think it will be about five lakhs."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know whether there is any report to show as to the time that will be taken to clear off the debt ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" There is no report."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know whether Government have any idea as to when the estate will be handed over to the zamindar ? "

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" The hon. Member is commenting upon his question."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" I want to know when the debt will be discharged so that the estate may be handed over to the zamindar."

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" It depends upon the state of the agricultural season. If the season is good the debts will be discharged soon ; but if there is a bad season, as in the past years, it will take a long time to clear off the debt. (Laughter.)"

Mr. L. K. TULASIRAM :—" Has not one Mr. Maduramuthu Thevar claimed the estate on account of this infirmity ? "

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—The question does not arise."

Irrigation

Supply of water in the Owk tank in Kurnool district.

* 1559 Q.—Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state, in view of the answers given to question No. 899 on 29th November 1928,—

(a) whether the report called for has been received ; and

(b) if it has been received, what it is ?

A.—(a) & (b) A report from the Subdivisional Officer, Public Works Department, has been received and has been referred to the Board of Revenue for remarks as it appears that the distribution of water from the tank is not in charge of the Public Works Department.

Progress of the Mettur Project.

* 1560 Q.—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased—

(i) to place before the House a statement showing

(a) the receipts and expenditure with plans and estimates as revised most recently in connexion with the Mettur Irrigation Project ;

(b) the various points in regard to which the expenditure has exceeded or is likely to exceed the original or later revised estimates ;

(c) the changes in the original and revised programme required ; and

(d) the details of the machinery and plant ordered, with the names of the firms from which they were ordered ; and